

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

INFORMATION

March 30, 1971

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MEMORANDUM FOR: DR. KISSINGER

FROM: MICHAEL A. GUHIN *GuH*

THRU: ROBERT M. BEHR *RB*

SUBJECT: Shift in Soviet CBW Arms Control Position
at Geneva *HK*

Today (March 30), the Soviets submitted to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD) at Geneva a draft convention (Tab A) to prohibit the development, production and stockpiling of biological weapons and toxins and to destroy existing stocks. On first reading, the Soviet draft appears very similar to the UK draft convention which the US supports.

You will recall that the Soviet position last year and at the opening session this year was that the problems of chemical and biological weapons were inseparable and should be treated in a single convention: namely, the 1969 draft convention of the socialist states. Many of the "non-aligned" members of the CCD have tended to favor the idea of a single CBW convention.

The Soviet draft convention on BW and toxins is a substantial shift toward our position that (1) BW and CW are separable problems and (2) we should move now toward a separate BW ban such as the proposed UK draft convention. Ambassador Roschin had earlier hinted that a shift toward the US position would be possible when the US ratifies the 1925 Geneva Protocol prohibiting the use of both CW and BW.

The Soviet move toward a separate BW ban, combined with a commitment to negotiations in good faith on CW, is apparently predicated inter alia on the assumption that the US will be ratifying the Geneva Protocol in the not too distant future.

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